

**STATE OF MAINE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

January 7, 2005

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Rulemaking: Chapter 130, Safety and
Accident Reporting Requirements

Docket No. 96-480

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Rulemaking: Reporting Requirements for
Local Exchange Carriers, Chapter 200

Docket No. 87-154

CONTACT PROTOCOL

Chapter 130 of the Commission's Rules, in Section 3(1), requires all utilities to provide immediate notice to the Commission of:

- any serious accident involving the loss of human life, and
- any event occurring upon a utility's premises or directly or indirectly arising from or connected with the maintenance or operation of its physical facilities or equipment that:
 - requires evacuation of the general public, or
 - results in, or is likely to result in, disruption of utility service to more than 500 customers or 1% of a utility's customers, whichever is greater, or to critical facilities identified by other public utilities, for a period of longer than 30 minutes.

That section requires that such notice be made "where such information has not already been reported pursuant to another Commission rule" (e.g., Chapter 200). That section also requires utilities to provide the immediate notice even if all of the information required for the notice is not yet available.

In addition, Section 3(2) of Chapter 130 requires utilities to file a follow-up written report within 30 days of any serious accident or electrical contact that results in the loss of human life; personal injury requiring inpatient hospital admission; more than seven days' lost work time of a utility employee or independent contractor; or property damage of \$50,000 or more, including the cost of lost gas in the case of gas and natural gas pipeline utilities. The utility shall address the written report to the Director of Technical Analysis, and shall provide a copy to the appropriate designated lead technical Staff.

Chapter 200 of the Commission's Rules requires local exchange carriers (including both ILECs and CLECs) to notify the Director of the Commission's Technical Analysis Division, or his or her designee, as soon as possible, but no later than twenty-four hours after any major service interruption.

Section 3(5) of Chapter 130 requires the Director of the Commission's Technical Analysis Division to "designate lead and alternate technical Staff members for each utility discipline" and to ensure that utilities subject to the rule are provided with current contact information.

This protocol is to update the notice procedure and contact list, last issued in December 2003, to be used by utilities making immediate or prompt notifications pursuant to Chapters 130 and 200 of the Commission's Rules. This protocol supersedes all previous notification instructions. ***Please distribute this information to all personnel in your utility that are responsible for notifying the Commission about emergencies, accidents, safety or security issues, or service-related failures or outages.***

INCIDENT NOTIFICATION

Notice of all incidents that require immediate or prompt notice to the Commission, including major facilities failures, outages, security incidents, and accidents, should be transmitted to the Commission both by fax and e-mail. Notice should be sent by e-mail to puc.elec@maine.gov, puc.tel@maine.gov, puc.gas@maine.gov, or puc.water@maine.gov, as applicable.¹ The same information contained in the e-mail notice should also be faxed to the Commission (fax: 207-287-1039), directed to the attention of both the responsible primary and alternate contacts identified on the attached MPUC Contact List.

If an emergency exists for which prompt Commission or Staff action is likely to be needed, if required by Commission Rules, if an incident attracts significant interest from other government agencies or from the media, or if specifically requested by the primary Staff contact identified on the attached MPUC Contact List, utilities shall also provide prompt telephone follow-up to the primary Staff contact (or alternate if the primary is not immediately available) at the Commission's offices (tel: 207-287-3831) during business hours. Telephone notification outside of Commission business hours should be directed to the Staff contact's home telephone if an emergency exists for which the utility requests prompt Commission response, or as specifically directed by the Staff contact. Utilities making telephone notices should establish personal contact with appropriate Staff members, and should not rely on voicemail messaging.

The e-mail and fax notices should include all available information required by Section 3(1) of Chapter 130, and also Section III(B) of Chapter 200 if applicable. As general guidance, the notice should include concise descriptions of what happened, where, and when. For outages, initial estimates of the number of customer accounts, specific services, and major facilities affected should be included. Preliminary estimates for restoration of services, and causes of the incident, to the extent known, should be provided.

Immediate notice should be submitted as soon as the utility becomes aware of a reportable incident (within one hour) and should not be delayed until all details can be confirmed or restoration estimates can be developed. The Commission recognizes that such notices are preliminary in nature and are likely to be revised as more information becomes available, but needs to know about such incidents as soon as practicable.

¹ These e-mail addresses are intended for incident notification only, and should not be used for any other purpose.

As further details about an incident become known, and as more precise restoration estimates are developed, utilities should provide updated notices following the same procedures described above, at approximately eight-hour intervals, until restoration has been completed to all but one percent of the number of customer accounts affected by the incident, or 100 customer accounts, whichever is greater. Utilities should also report the clearing of an incident (e.g., when a facility is restored to service, or at the end of an extended outage).

Copies of utility news releases related to major outages or other reportable events should also be provided via fax and e-mail when issued.

A **confidential** list of MPUC Contacts is attached. That sheet summarizes the notification protocols described above, and designates primary, alternate, and backup Commission Staff contacts for each utility sector.

Faith Huntington
Director
Technical Analysis Division

attachment: MPUC Contact List *[confidential – not included here]*

